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ABSTRACT

A study investigated the relationship between language contacts made outside of the classroom by Japanese foreign students and how those contacts affect their participation within the classroom and their overall academic performance. Subjects were 32 university students from Japan enrolled in an intensive language program. All of the students had studied English in secondary school as well as at the university. The students were classified as high-input-generators or low-input-generators according to their participation in class, and responded to a questionnaire concerning language contact. Teachers' observations of student participation and subjects' grade point averages were also gathered. Results indicate a positive correlation between use of English outside and inside the classroom with high academic achievement in language and academic subject matter. Low language contact and low participation in class also correlated with low academic achievement. Promotion of participation in the community and encouragement in development of social contacts outside the classroom are recommended for foreign students. The language contact questionnaire is appended. Contains 14 references. (MSE)

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Japanese Students Abroad: Relating Language Ability in Class and in the Community

James Ellis

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INTRODUCTION

Background of the study:

This study grew out of an ongoing interest in the concept of language interaction in class and in the community. Participation in both of these areas has been studied as an important factor in the development of a second language. With this in mind, the researcher examined the literature to find that other studies indicate the existence of a positive association between classroom participation and language contact. Moreover, the studies suggest that language contact is related to language proficiency but they make no reference to language achievement.

The literature states that participation in and out of class is an important part of developing language proficiency. This paper goes beyond that conclusion to examine the relationship of participation and language achievement.

Participation in class and in the community by second language learners can be affected by a number of variables. One significant variable found to inhibit participation in classes of strictly Japanese learners is gender. The previous research in this area did not consider sex as a variable but this study demonstrates that sex must be taken into consideration. Furthermore, in-class participation may have been affected by culture shock as some students who were low participants seemed to be experiencing

a number of adjustment problems.

Culture shock also appears to have an effect on participation in the community and the social networks of the learners seem to play an important role in assisting in the adjustment process. This study looks closely at social networks outside of the classroom as they can ease individuals through the negative feelings often experienced when in a new culture. Moreover, as other studies have shown, the social networks of language learners are clearly the main source of language use outside of the classroom.

A mono-cultural group of Japanese college students was chosen because the cultural traits of the Japanese would provide an interesting element to the participation factor—in and out of the ESL language classroom. The researcher believed that a significant amount of the data collected would be affected by various cultural characteristics. One prominent example of this as Skipper (1988) notes is the Japanese aversion for explicit verbalization. He points out that this dislike also reflects the traditional Japanese group orientation and hierarchical consciousness expressed through an elaborate system of honorific speech. Moreover, it is felt within the Japanese culture that that the direct expression of views can lead to disharmony among group members or even isolation from one's group. This cultural component of Japanese learners presents numerous difficulties to ESL/EFL instructors who may try in vain to produce spontaneous participation in their classrooms.

Identification of the Problem:

A large amount of research has been done in the area of participation and language learning. Yet, there still exists a large void in the various studies; that concerning the specific cultural traits of students and how those characteristics may affect par-

ticipation. This study looks at the kinds of language contacts Japanese learners make outside of the English classroom abroad and how those contacts affect their participation within the classroom and their overall academic performance.

Moreover, academic performance has not been studied in correlation with outside of classroom contact or participation using a large mono-cultural sample. Seliger (1977) performed a study in which he utilized a small multi-cultural group of subjects (6) while Day (1984) used a large group (58) consisting of Japanese and other mainly Asian subjects. His subjects ranged in age from 19-39. This research looks at subjects aged 19-24.

The Japanese culture is perhaps one of the richest and most complicated in the world. The ancient traditions of Japan remain indoctrinated in the minds of many of Japan's younger generation who have chosen to study English overseas. For this reason it is important to look at how these students perform in the classroom and correlate that with what they do linguistically outside of the classroom (ie: social networks and language used for communication within the groups).

It is also important to realize that Japanese students are more passive in the language classroom than their North American counterparts. Therefore, participation was closely examined in this study in order to determine whether there is any relation between what happens linguistically outside of the classroom and what happens within.

The types of contacts the students make outside of the classroom varies greatly. A lot of it has to do with the student's internal desire to learn and to meet native speakers in the host community. One problem with this is that for Japanese students—going out to meet the host nationals is not an easy task. However, the mono-cultural bonds of the students outside of

the classroom are important and should not be discouraged as they may act as a buffer against culture shock. These networks, however, should eventually open up to allow other non-Japanese individuals to enter the group. If this does not happen the mono-cultural groups will isolate themselves, deprived of any native speaker input.

METHODOLOGY

This study is both quantitative and qualitative in nature. To begin with the researcher observed the students in class to determine their various levels of participation using a numerical scoring sheet. Outside of the classroom, however, it was impossible for the researcher to monitor the actions of the subjects so a questionnaire (see appendix) was distributed at the beginning and at the end of the term. Each question on the survey carried a certain number of points.

Subjects:

The subjects for this study were foreign students from Japan who studied in an intensive program sponsored by a large post secondary institution in the Vancouver area. The content based curriculum included the following courses: Business English, North American Studies, Reading and Composition, Pronunciation, Oral Communication, Expressive Communication, and Current Topics.

All of the subjects came from a large Japanese university located in one of the country's major centres. There were two classes of 16 making a total of 32 students, 19 males and 13 females. 21 of the students were English majors, 8 were Foreign Trade majors, 2 were Business Administration majors and 1 was an Economics major. Their level of English ranged from lower

intermediate to advanced. All of the students had studied English for eight years in junior and senior high school in addition to their English study at university. The English majors naturally receiving more English instruction than their peers from the other departments.

Observation:

To determine whether the students were High Input Generators (HIGs) or Low Input Generators (LIGs) the researcher prepared an overt participation sheet in order to monitor the amount of input the students contributed to the class. This sheet includes areas of overt participation only such as: calling out, handraising, volunteering, and initiating conversations with the instructor or with other students.

The researcher then put a check beside a student's name if he or she participated once and two checks if the amount of participation exceeded that in any way. Therefore, the students who participated overtly to an extremely high degree received two checks for the class observed, those who participated only once received one check and those who failed to participate unless nominated by the instructor received nil.

Classroom contact:

The researcher observed the students in their classroom setting on 6 separate occasions, making a total of 12 hours observed. He received permission from the program coordinator to go ahead with the study and the students were informed that they were part of a study but were not aware of what the study was about.

Social contact:

In addition to the classroom contact that the researcher had with the students, he also participated in extra curricular activities such as skating, volleyball and dining out with the subjects. This enabled him to talk with some of the subjects and "verify" whether what they said on their questionnaires corresponded with what they told him. The students were not interrogated as the relevant information was obtained within the context of social dialogue.

The questionnaire:

Seliger's study (1977) of interaction patterns and L2 competence provided the researcher with a Language Contact Profile (LCP) with which to administer to the students. Seliger's LCP was a revised version of an earlier questionnaire he developed for the study of language contact and motivation. It is a self-report questionnaire which quantifies the learner's motivation and the extent of contact with the second language (potential practice opportunities) outside of the regular classes. While numerical values are obtained in response to the variously weighted questions, the LCP in fact provides only approximate measures and they should be interpreted as such. The students, however, received LCPs without the scoring system. This was done to avoid any contamination of the results.

Administration of LCP:

The questionnaire was distributed twice during the term, once at the beginning of September (LCP-1) and again at the end of the term in December (LCP-2). The students were told by the researcher that they were part of his study but they were not given any specifics for fear of falsified data. The subjects were in-

formed, however, that an abstract of the completed study would be sent to their university in Japan.

Some of the vocabulary on the questionnaire needed explanation and this was done when LCP-1 was distributed. The format of the two questionnaires remained basically the same excepting for an additional question on the second LCP. It asked the students for their personal opinion as to the best method for improving their oral/aural communication skills.

The students were to complete the questionnaires in their own time. In this manner, the subjects' class time would not be intruded upon. Most of the LCPs came back to the researcher within seven days.

Teacher Ranking:

In order to determine how the instructors viewed the subjects' participation they were asked to complete an overt participation ranking. The instructors ranked the students on a 1 to 5 scale according to the level of participation exhibited by each student. These results were compared with the researchers observation results.

Academic performance:

The participation and LCP scores were also correlated with the students' overall academic performance. To do this the program coordinator granted the researcher access to the students' first term Grade Point Averages (GPAs).

QUANTITATIVE RESULTS

The quantitative analysis employs charts, graphs and statistics to illustrate the results. The statistical package used is the SPSS: X program. This program is often used when correlation and

regression analyses are performed. To begin with, the researcher tabulated all the results into the various categories of: Language Contact Profile Scores, TOEFL Scores, GPA, and Participation. This data was then compared and put into graph form to provide key visuals for easier comprehension. The researcher then ran the tables of data through the SPSS: X statistical program to produce a correlation and regression analysis.

Correlational analysis:

The first research question is answered in this and the following section:

1. To what extent is there association between participation in the community, participation in class, language achievement, general academic achievement and gender?

The correlation analysis shown in Table 1 illustrates how all of the independent variables (LCP1/2, Participation, TOEFL, GPA, and Gender) relate to the dependent variable, language achievement (GPAL), as well as how they relate to one another. The results show a positive and fairly strong correlation between LCP2 and GPAL at .62 ($p < .001$). This indicates the higher the LCP2 score, the higher the GPAL score. In addition, positive correlations are revealed between language achievement and

Table 1 Correlation of Language Contact Inside and Outside of Classroom With Language Achievement

	GPA	GPAL	LCP1	LCP2	TOEFL	Participation
GPAL	.91***					
LCP1	.57***	.54**				
LCP2	.64***	.62***	.61***			
TOEFL	.60***	.64***	.38*	.34*		
Participation	.58***	.51**	.44**	.34*	.32*	
Gender	-.04	.09	-.26	-.11	.00	-.50**

* $p \leq .05$ ** $p \leq .01$ *** $p \leq .001$

GPA at .91 ($p < .001$), LCP1 at .54 ($p < .001$), TOEFL at .64 ($p < .001$), and Participation at .51 ($p < .001$). A negative correlation ($r = -.50$, $p < .005$), however, was found between participation and gender (male designated by 0, female by 1). In fact, this measure of association is the point-series correlation. This indicates that the male subjects tended to participate in the classroom more often than did their female peers.

The above shows a strong relationship between the independent variables mentioned (LCP1/2, Gender, Participation, TOEFL, and GPA) and the dependent variable (GPAL), all of which were highly significant.

Multiple Regression Analysis:

The multiple regression as shown in Table 2 indicates how all the independent variables correlate with GPAL when shown together. Standard multiple regression analysis was used to determine the predictive power of the independent variable. In a standard multiple regression all the independent variables are entered into the regression equation simultaneously. This form of regression allows one to assess the combined predictive power of the independent variables found to be significant as well as

Table 2 Multiple Regression of Language Contact Inside and Outside of Classroom on Language Achievement

Variable	B	SE B	Beta	T	Sig. T
Gender	.369100	.120483	.370088	3.064	.0050
TOEFL	.005761	.001930	.342828	2.985	.0061
LCP2	.021884	.008510	.332478	2.571	.0162
Participation	.416038	.129961	.420448	3.201	.0036
LCP1	.008417	.009798	.117805	0.859	.3982
(Constant)	-.750455	.741409		-1.012	.3208

Equation $F = 14.40521$; Significance of $F = .0000$; $df = 5, 26$; Multiple $R = .85718$; R Square = .73476; Adjusted R Square = .68276

their relative contributions in the form of standardized beta weights.

The overall regression equation produced an F-value (14.41; $df=5, 26$) which was significant at the $p<.0001$ level. (This indicates that the R^2 was significantly different from zero). Multiple R was found to be .86. This indicates a combined correlation of all of the independent variables with the dependent variable. The R Squared value (.7348), however, indicates the proportion of variance accounted for by a linear combination of the independent variables. This value is lower due to the fact that LCP1 had little predictive power which was distinct from LCP2 and, therefore did not remain in the regression equation. The Adjusted R Square stands at .68376 which indicates that Gender, TOEFL, LCP2 and Participation predicted 68% of the variance in GPAL with 32% of the variance remaining unaccounted for.

The range of standardized beta weights for the independent variables in the regression equation was relatively small. The descending order of significant beta weights from highest to lowest is as follows: Participation (.4204); Gender (.3700); TOEFL (.3428); and LCP2 (.3325). All of these were found significant to the $p<.05$ level. Although LCP2 is fourth in the list, the fact that the range was not large indicates that the predictive power of LCP2 was roughly the same as the other variables.

The figures of the R squared change indicate to what extent the independent variables contribute to the prediction of the dependent variable (GPAL) over and above the values of TOEFL. Thus, it is possible to determine which independent variables exist as separate entities from TOEFL (see Table 3).

TOEFL had a significant R squared change of .40623 ($p<.0001$). LCP2 showed a highly significant R squared change of .18396 ($p<.0001$) while participation had a non-significant R squared

Table 3 Contribution of Individual Variables to the Multiple Regression of Language Contact Inside and Outside of the Classroom on Language Achievement

Variable	R Squared Change	p
TOEFL	.40623	.0001
LCP2	.18396	.0011
Participation	.04715	.0667
Gender	.08990	.0060
LCP1	.00753	.3982

change of 3.64 ($p > .05$). When TOEFL was excluded from the regression analysis, both LCP2 and participation, when regressed individually against GPAL, made significant contributions to the regression equation [R square change = .38398 ($p < .001$) and .25853 ($p < .01$), respectively]. These results indicate that, with TOEFL, gender, and LCP1 excluded from the regression equation, LCP2 and participation could be useful predictors of GPAL.

Discussion of Quantitative Results:

The correlation and regression analyses indicate that there is a positive relationship between the second questionnaire (LCP2) and student language achievement (GPAL). Therefore, higher scores on LCP2 which was distributed at the end of the term tended to be related to the higher GPAL scores.

There are a number of possible factors which may have affected the students' performance in the language classroom. Gender, degree of culture shock, existence of social networks, age and peer pressure seem to have had some effect on deterring participation and affecting overall performance.

There is a strongly indoctrinated principle in Japanese society called the "sempai-kohai" relationship. As Koike (1978) remarks, it is the hierarchy of age and social position which helps perpetuate group harmony with the ideas of socially "lower"

or younger persons often being ignored while "equals" confer and, in turn, submit to the will of their "superiors." In a language classroom made up of solely Japanese students this can have serious consequences. The younger students can often be intimidated by those older than them. As a result, they will avoid participating for fear of offending their "superiors."

Strongly related to the effect age has in regards to participation in the classroom is peer pressure used by the Japanese to extract conformity. There is an old Japanese proverb which states that the protruding nail gets hammered down. This facet of the Japanese culture is an extremely difficult one for ESL/EFL instructors to change as they are running against deeply engrained Japanese cultural characteristics. As a result, LIGs who may play a "superior" role in the classroom may force HIGs to lessen their input.

In addition to age and peer pressure, the gender of the students appears to have played a role in affecting the degree of participation in the classroom. Gender does not, however, relate to any of the other independent variables—only participation.

Quite typically, it is common for Japanese males to be more aggressive in the classroom. In Confucian societies, females are socialized to be introverted and this leads to lack of participation in the classroom. Busch (1982) performed a study of introversion-extraversion and the EFL proficiency of Japanese students. In it she found that the male role may permit men to exhibit extraverted behaviour in the classroom and elsewhere. Therefore, extraverted behaviour may be instrumental in assisting Japanese males to learn to speak a foreign language. Women, Busch (1982) suggests, may have to find other ways of learning to speak a language within the confines of the female role. Extraverted behaviour may not be a salient factor for women in

learning to speak a foreign language because of culturally determined roles in Japan. In an ESL setting, however, as opposed to an EFL setting, even the introverted students find themselves in situations in which they must use the target language.

In relation to the effect of gender on participation are the attitudes toward the members of the opposite sex. The reason this may affect participation is that many students appear to be influenced by their group of friends. If that group consists of several boisterous young men or rather quiet young women then you behave accordingly. In Japan (Doi, 1973) it is common for emotional links between members of the same sex to take preference over those with the opposite sex. This was evident in the classes under study as the males and females continually sat in their segregated groups. Also, when socializing, the students spent most of their free time with members of the same sex.

Finally, the degree of culture shock the learners experienced and the existence of social networks and support groups influenced not only participation but language contact outside of the classroom and academic performance more generally. Students who experienced extreme culture shock underwent serious emotional upheaval which had direct effects in and out of the classroom. Adversely, those subjects who had no difficulty in adapting to Canadian life fared much better in all cases.

The existence of social networks and support groups had obvious effects as well. Those learners who were content socially seemed to be in a more positive state of well being as opposed to the students who had no form of social networks. Undoubtedly, a sense of identity and belonging creates feelings of security which can lead to a positive attitude towards learning English.

Explanation of charts and graphs:

Analysis of the data has presented a number of interesting patterns which are visually represented in the following charts. The second and third research questions are answered in this section:

2. To what extent do the learners increase/decrease their English language contact throughout the term?
3. To what extent do those students with an increase/decrease in Target Language contact participate in the classroom?

FIGURE ONE illustrates the comparison of the scores of the Language Contact Profiles (LCP) which the students completed at the beginning of their four month term and again at the end. According to the questionnaire results, 63% of all the students increased their English language contact during the semester,

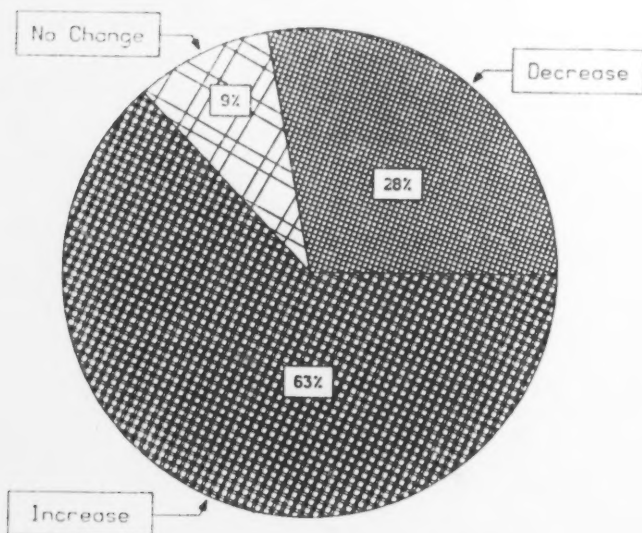


Figure 1 Comparison of Language Contact Profile Scores (LCP1 versus LCP2)

28% decreased and 9% showed no change whatsoever. These figures show encouraging results as the majority of students may have learned throughout the term how to increase their English contacts and make use of them. In addition to this, the researcher distributed the first questionnaire at the beginning of the term. This was only a few weeks after the students had arrived in Canada and their contacts with the host community would have been limited. By the end of the term, however, the majority of students had shown greater English language contact outside of the classroom.

FIGURE TWO shows that 60% of the students who increased their LCP scores were High Input Generators (HIGs) who

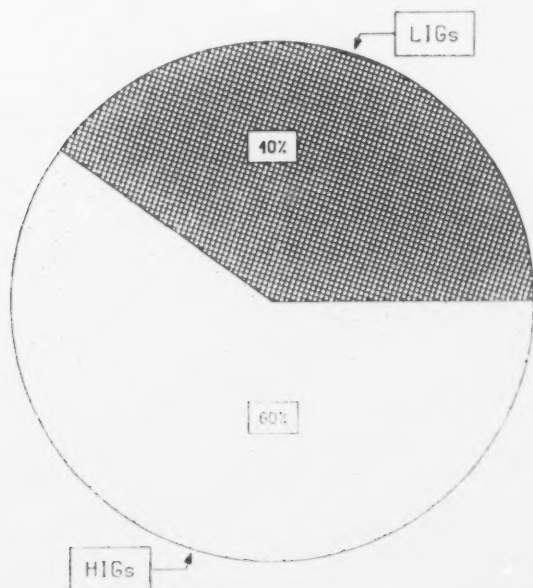


Figure 2 Comparison of Participation for Increased Language Contact Profile Scores

interacted intensively in the classroom. The remaining 40% were Low Input Generators (LIGs) and played a relatively passive role in the classroom. These results suggest that those learners who are extraverted in the classroom may also be extraverted outside of the classroom. There are also the learners who appear to be more extraverted outside of the classroom than in. Those 40% may be affected by the group situation of the classroom or perhaps by one or more of the cultural variables which can affect the performance of Japanese students. In the case of this study many of the LIGs appeared to be afraid of making mistakes in front of their peers. Moreover, the female subjects would usually permit the males in the class to respond rather than doing so themselves.

FIGURE THREE indicates that the majority of the students who received a lower LCP score on the second distribution at the end of the term were LIGs (56%). The remaining 44% who received a lower score were HIGs. These results may be due to certain cultural characteristics or other variables such as the degree of culture shock the learners were experiencing. As mentioned earlier, many individuals go through various phases of culture shock which can have implications in the classroom. The LIGs who decreased have demonstrated that they are not only introverted in the classroom but outside of the classroom as well. The HIGs who decreased on their LCP score may have done so due to various extraneous variables such as those mentioned above.

In conclusion, the majority of the students increased their English language contact throughout the term. Of those learners, most were HIGs in the classroom. This suggests that their extraverted behaviour inside the classroom may have been carried out into the host community as well or vice versa. Perhaps the

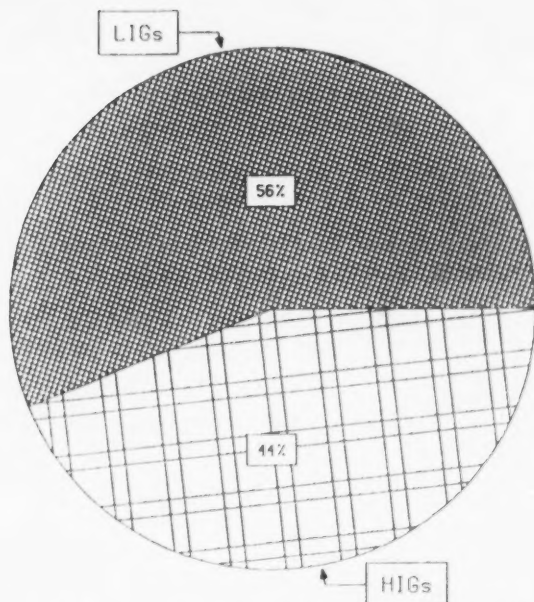


Figure 3 Comparison of Participation for Decreased Language Contact Profile Scores

main reason for the increase in English language contact during the research period had to do with the fact that the longer the subjects were in the English speaking environment, the more opportunity they were presented with to develop and utilize their language skills.

This does not hold true, however, for the students who decreased their amount of English contact during the term. Most of those students were LIGs in the classroom and their low scores on the second LCP reflect an intraversion outside of the classroom as well.

QUALITATIVE RESULTS

In order to understand fully the various factors which can affect participation a short case study will provide an appropriate analysis of the qualitative results. Through this approach, a detailed look at some of the subjects under study can provide descriptive support to the quantitative results. To this end, the researcher chose to look at two of each of the top, middle and bottom students. This provided insight into what kinds of learners participated more than others in the classroom, performed well or poorly on their language achievement test, established a large number of English contacts outside of the ESL classroom and succeeded academically.

In order to maintain the anonymity of the subjects the researcher chose to use letters as a means of identification. In addition to this, the personal pronouns he and she are used accordingly.

I. Case study of two top students:

A. Students S and H:

Both of the top students were so similar in terms of participation, language achievement, out of class contact and academic performance that the researcher has chosen to describe them together rather than with separate descriptions. Students S and H were both males in their early twenties. Student S had previously lived in the United States on an exchange program but Student H had not. Both were obvious leaders within the group. Their language achievement scores were significantly higher than most of the class (3.60/4.00 and 3.20/4.00 respectively) and their overall GPAs were very high as well (3.80/4.00 and 3.40/4.00 respectively).

Upon entering the classroom, the instructor was always greeted

by these two students who had no difficulty initiating conversation. It was evident that they both seized every available opportunity in the classroom to practice the target language with each other, their peers and with the instructor. Upon observation, it became evident that during pair and group work activities, these students continually initiated conversation and acted as leaders throughout the various tasks. The instructor always paired Students S and H with LIGs for peer tutoring purposes.

In addition to their strength in the initiating of conversations, both S and H asked a lot of questions in the classroom. They did not seem to hesitate at all and showed no fear of making mistakes. Their spoken English was excellent in comparison with their peers. It is possible, nevertheless, that they were aware of this fact and took advantage of the situation to maximize their practice opportunities. Neither S nor H behaved in an intimidating manner. Moreover, they never monopolized class time and never inhibited other students from participating as well. When paired with a LIG whose communicative skills were not as good as their own, both S and H made the individual feel comfortable and showed no signs of displeasure or impatience with their partner. In fact, the two top subjects were so astute that they would try to draw conversation out of their partners by asking them questions or by getting them to present their findings to the class. H on one occasion encouraged his LIG partner to answer one of the questions posed by the instructor. He then sincerely praised his partner afterwards for responding. This showed amazing sensitivity to one's peers and was certainly appreciated by all the students.

Academically S and H performed very well on all tests and assignments and H showed obvious disappointment if his homework or test results were not up to his high standards. S did not

appear to be as concerned about his marks as he almost always did well. Moreover, he stated to the instructor that his main concern was improving his listening and speaking skills so he was not terribly concerned if he received a mark that was not as high as usual.

Outside of the classroom both S and H were very good friends. They did a lot of socializing together and travelled a great deal while in Canada. They both had Native Speaker friends and spent time going out with them always using the target language. In addition, the researcher overheard both H and S speaking together outside of the classroom in English. This was an indicator of their strong desire to maximize their English usage while many LIGs spoke Japanese outside of the classroom.

The positive outlook that H and S had on their experience in Canada reflected itself in and out of the classroom. In addition to this, their scholastic performance was excellent and their outgoing personalities certainly acted as an impetus for their high level of English contact.

II. Case study of two middle students:

A. Student T:

Student T, a female, could very much have been one of the top students had she not succumbed to the pressure of other females in the class. T had the second highest language achievement score in the entire group of subjects (3.70/4.00) and her general academic performance score was high as well (3.40/4.00).

A bright and pleasant person, T participated to a high degree at the beginning of the term but appeared to have been forced to lessen her level of input. T spoke excellent English and did very well academically. Some of her female peers did not seem to appreciate this and one student (N) would in fact noticeably glare

at T when she spoke up in class. These two women rarely spoke to each other unless forced to do so in the context of learning and always sat in separate areas of the classroom. From the researcher's point of view, N appeared to be jealous of T's outgoing personality and facility with the English language. T also had the experience of living abroad in an English-speaking country for a year which only enhanced the feelings of jealousy towards her. As a result, T eventually stopped participating in the classroom unless nominated by the instructor. She did this in order to conform to the group (of female students). N, who was a LIG appeared to have exerted pressure on T to lessen her input in the classroom. Edamatsu (1978) states that in Japanese culture individual autonomy is suppressed, and loyalty to the group is emphasized, for solidarity is of paramount importance to the survival of the group. Furthermore, as Moloney (1954) notes, individualism is seen as an evil that breeds conflict and hence is inimical to group harmony.

Removed from the classroom environment the researcher found T to be animated and more than willing to initiate conversation—a stark contrast from her in-class personality. She did not appear to be experiencing any adverse reactions to cultural adjustment nor was she intimidated by the instructor. Having a male instructor may cause some Japanese females to be more intimidated than with a female instructor. With Japanese learners a male instructor is often more effective in forming bonds with the males than with the females.

B. Student Y:

Student Y, a male in his early twenties was an above average student academically with an amazing desire to improve his English and made every effort to do so outside of the classroom. Y

received an average score on the language achievement GPA (2.60/4.00) and an above average overall GPA score (2.80/4.00).

Inside of the classroom Y would rarely participate unless nominated by the instructor. He performed his tasks with great enthusiasm but was never too keen on speaking up in class. Y appeared to be a leader when it came to social events and was in fact a senior member of his University's student council in Japan. In the program in Canada, however, he appeared to be somewhat intimidated by the older male students who had a better grasp of the target language.

Y loved to socialize with Native Speakers and went to great lengths to meet Canadians. He was not terribly concerned about his marks. He appeared to thrive outside of the classroom—continually creating opportunities to partake in extended discourse with Native Speakers. It was obvious that he appeared more at ease outside of the classroom where the pressure to perform was not as strong.

Y's relationship with the instructor was a very positive one. He would readily initiate conversation with the instructor before and after the class. He would also ask questions while all the class was working on task—a period when most students were concerned about completing the assigned work rather than listening to someone else's question.

Y never appeared to have undergone any negative effects of culture shock and his host family situation was a positive one. He was very much an experiential language learner and spent most of his free time socializing with Canadians rather than doing homework. His dynamic personality certainly helped him in forming many bonds with Native Speakers but like the female student T, he was much quieter in the classroom than outside of it. It may have been very frustrating for him to have held an

important leadership role at his university in Japan and then to come to Canada to find himself at a loss in the classroom. This must have caused him great pain, damaging his pride. That may explain his extremely extraverted behaviour outside of class.

III. Case study of two lower students:

The two lower students who performed poorly academically were LIGs and had minimal English contact outside of the ESL classroom. Student K, a female and Student M, a male were both in their early twenties at the time of the study. K received an average language achievement score (2.60/4.00) and an average GPA score (2.30/4.00). M received a below average score on his language achievement GPA (2.30/4.00) and a below average score on his overall GPA (2.00/4.00).

A. Student K:

Student K was an extremely introverted person and provided no input in the classroom whatsoever. Even when nominated by the instructor she always responded with an "I don't know" or an "I have no idea" response. The sex of the instructor may have caused her to become more intimidated than with a female instructor. Student K also chose a seating position away from the front of the class. This may have been done to avoid drawing attention to herself so as not to be called upon by the teacher.

K struggled throughout the various lessons and displayed no interest at all in learning the subject matter. It became evident after only a short period of time that K was undergoing severe culture shock which she would never completely recover from. On one occasion K had placed her head on her desk and the instructor inquired whether anything was wrong. K's friend sitting next to her responded with "Everything is wrong."

Through discussions with some of her instructors, the researcher discovered that K was a very unhappy person with almost no social bonds outside of the classroom. The bonds she did have were minimal and the language of communication was strictly Japanese. One instructor who utilized a journal activity in his classroom provided important insight into her desperate situation: through the journal he discovered that she preferred to be alone and even when her host family was there she spent a large portion of her time in her room. Moreover, her weekends were often spent alone or partaking in limited social functions.

K also made very little effort to use English in the classroom. The instructor constantly reminded her not to use Japanese in class but the unceasing reprimands had no effect. Even while working on task K would resort to her L1. Not only did the instructor find this behaviour frustrating but her peers did as well. Her negative attitude towards learning English and her constant use of Japanese in class could explain why so many of her classmates did not seem to enjoy working with her.

K's behaviour indicated the more serious consequences of culture shock. Her antagonistic behaviour in and out of the classroom were clear symptoms of the disorder. On a couple of occasions, however, the researcher managed to talk with K outside of the classroom and found her shy but willing to talk. In a one on one situation outside of the classroom and away from her peers, K appeared to open up. Similar to other students, K seemed to feel more at ease outside of the classroom than within. The fear of making mistakes in front of one's peers seems to be a recurring factor with the Japanese learners.

B. Student M:

According to the various instructors, M underwent a serious

metamorphosis throughout the program. He exhibited a strong desire to learn at the beginning of the program and appeared to be very outgoing. As time progressed, however, M's behaviour in and out of the classroom began to change. His eagerness dissipated and he retreated physically and emotionally in the classroom.

M never initiated conversation with the instructor and would only do so with his peers in Japanese. He spoke a lot of Japanese in and out of the classroom and this may have been an indicator of culture shock. As his performance in the ESL classroom was very poor he appeared to have no desire to speak English outside of class. A very pleasant young man, M found the content material too difficult to follow. As a result, instead of asking questions or approaching the instructor after the lesson for clarification on certain points he would let himself get further and further behind. His academic performance was abysmal and this may have led to his silence in the classroom as well.

His peers demonstrated great patience with him, realizing his weakness with the English language. One of his closest friends, however, was one of the top students in the class. This association may have created some self-comparison leading M to feel even more isolated.

Outside of the classroom M participated in some of the activities but never took on any significant roles within the program. M's host family situation was a very negative one which may explain his unhappiness at school. He had complained about his host family circumstances and did in fact request to be moved. His unfortunate home situation, combined with a poor performance in the classroom undoubtedly created a serious case of culture shock that he would have difficulty recovering from.

Summary:

From analysis of the qualitative results, further support is given to the quantitative findings and light is shed onto possible reasons for gender differences. There were also indications that low participants and achievers were undergoing problems and possibly culture shock. It became evident after looking at how the top, middle and lower students performed that the quantitative information can indeed be applied to the classroom situation. Students S and H, for example, had a high degree of English contact outside of the classroom, were high language achievers, performed very well academically and were HIGs as well. Their outgoing personalities carried out into the community as well as enabling them to establish a number of contacts with Native Speakers.

The two middle students, T and Y, were put into that category for different reasons. T performed well in the classroom and on her language achievement test but she would probably have done much better had there been no pressure put upon her by her peers. T did not want to stand out too much and clearly lessened her input in the classroom because of certain individuals intimidating her. There were no negative reports about her host family environment and she did not appear to have undergone severe culture shock. Her previous cross cultural experience would have indeed helped her adjust in Canada. Although a LIG in the classroom, T did well academically and had a high level of English contact outside of the classroom. T may also have felt the need to conform to the typical female role and remained quiet throughout her lessons.

Similar to T but for different reasons, Y was a LIG in the classroom, received a below average score on his language achievement test, an above average GPA but had an extremely high

level of English language contact outside of the classroom. A very social person, Y appeared to be more comfortable outside of the classroom. His loss of status due to his lower level of English may have caused him to lose face to a certain degree and this could be one of the reasons for his low input in the classroom.

At the lower end of the scale are K and M who both were extremely introverted, had above and below average achievement scores, spoke a lot of Japanese in and out of the classroom, had difficult home stay situations, did poorly academically and had limited social networks. The quantitative results show a relation between the students with the low levels of English contact outside of the classroom with low achievement scores.

If the situation for K and M were different perhaps their experience in Canada would have been a more positive one. If they had a positive and supportive host family environment would things have changed positively in the classroom? If they had a strong and supportive social network would that have helped? If they had a number of Native Speaker friends would that have perhaps assisted them in performing better in the classroom and enjoying their time in Canada? Those questions are difficult to answer because each of the students has a unique personality and they may or may not behave differently in altered situations.

In relation to other studies, the findings of this research are highly similar to Seliger's (1977) study but they contradict Day's (1984) results. The similarities with their studies stop at the association of participation in class and in the community. This study has gone beyond previous research to find a positive association between participation in both class and community to academic performance both in language specifically and in subject matter courses.

With the exception of the two middle students who fall into

both categories, the top two and bottom two were ideal examples of HIGs and LIGs respectively. H and S were active learners who utilized all language environments, both formal and natural, for practice by interacting and getting others to use the target language with them. In addition to this they were each high language achievers while the LIGs who were much more passive in the classroom did not. The LIGs also avoided practice opportunities by often retreating from interaction and intensive contact with the target language.

Students S and H at the top of the scale both had positive experiences in Canada. Would things have been different for them if they were in different living and social situations? Probably not. Their strong and outgoing personalities would most likely see them through. The students at the lower end of the scale did not have such a positive outlook which might have helped them through the more difficult times. Not everyone possesses that sort of personality, however, and those who do not must find other ways to survive in and out of the classroom.

The theory of the social networks functioning as a buffer against culture shock and other problems is an interesting one because it simply gives the learners the opportunity to talk about their problems which is therapy in itself. This feeling of belonging helps the language learner feel more comfortable in the foreign surroundings which creates a more positive learning environment in and out of the classroom.

CONCLUSIONS

This study examined the relationship between outside of classroom language contact in the form of intensity of verbal interaction between the learners and their language environment and the effects of this contact on their language achievement, gender,

classroom participation, and academic performance both in language specifically and subject matter courses.

The quantitative results of the study focused on subjects who were at either end of what Seliger (1977) calls an "interaction continuum." This was done in an attempt to determine if being on the high end—a high input generator—would result in more target language contact outside of the classroom and a higher GPA as opposed to being on the low end of the continuum—a low input generator.

The existence of such a continuum was reinforced in this study as the students could indeed be labelled HIGs and LIGs on the basis of their responses to the instructor's general solicits and their self-initiated turns in class. Moreover, the research has shown a positive association between the second questionnaire, language achievement and general academic performance. This indicated that the students with high scores on their pro-term language proficiency tests would most likely have a high degree of language contact outside of the classroom and would also perform well in language and subject matter courses.

A high score on LCP2 denotes that the learners seized more opportunities to practice the L2 than those who received a low score. This desire to employ the target language as much as possible outside of the classroom manifested itself in class as well. The regression analysis showed that there was a correlation between high participation in class and community with language achievement. Converse results were illustrated between low participation in class and community and low language achievement. In other words, all of the independent variables in the study such as LCP1 and 2, TOEFL, participation, GPA and gender had a positive effect on the dependent variable GPAL (language achievement). Specifically, those students who had

high scores on their TOEFL test, LCP2 and were HIGs all had high GPALs. Negative association was found between gender and participation—this refers to the fact that the female subjects of this study participated less in class than the males.

The significance of this research reaches beyond simply understanding associations between external language behaviour, participation, and academic performance. It encompasses an extremely wide range of cultural variables which have affected the results in different ways. For the most part, it has always been seen as a negative factor for ESL students to constantly associate in mono-cultural groups. This attitude, however, is indeed changing as it becomes more acceptable for learners to mix with students from the same cultural background. Research has shown that belonging to a viable social network assists in leading the learners to a more positive state of well-being. In addition, the support students receive from their mono-cultural groups may work as a buffer against the perils of culture shock which has direct reflections in the language classroom.

With the Japanese learners there are of course other factors aside from culture shock and the existence of social bonds which can affect language behaviour outside and inside of the classroom. Peer pressure to conform, intimidation from other students, a negative host family situation, role shock, and gender of the instructor can have a negative effect on participation within the classroom walls. Each learner of course possesses a unique personality and some are naturally more extraverted than others. As a result, they are the ones who make more of an effort to utilize the target language outside of the classroom. Even though extraverted, some students may hold back within the classroom not wanting to stand out more than necessary.

Limitations of the study:

Before closing, some limitations of the study should be mentioned. First, the classroom observation focused only on the quantitative use of the target language and not on qualitative usage. Simple utterances received the same score as longer, more complex ones. Future research could perhaps analyze the length and complexity of utterances before correlating them with LCP and language achievement scores, gender, and overall GPA.

Second, even though the sample size of subjects was an improvement over Seliger's, future research related to this paper should include a larger sample size. Third, the results of this study may not be generalizable to other classrooms in which English is being taught as the target language. The subjects for this study were young adults learning in an intensive ESL setting. Not only were they immersed in the target language at school but in their homestay situations as well. Moreover, the subjects were in Canada for a temporary period of time and this may have had an effect on their desire to perform as well.

Finally, there may be some objections to the use of self-report data, as were obtained by the LCP. The LCP quantifies the learner's motivation and the extent of contact with the second language (potential practice opportunities) outside of the regular language class. Numerical values are obtained in response to variously weighted questions and these are only approximate measures and should be interpreted as such. Ideally, we should observe second language learners as they interact outside of the classroom, and not rely solely on how they report they interact.

Implications of the research:

Bearing in mind the limitations stated above, certain tentative conclusions may be drawn. This research has shown that there

exists a positive association between the use of the target language outside and inside of the classroom with high academic achievement in language and academic subject matter. Moreover, the opposite was also illustrated with low participation in class and community and low academic achievement in language and academic subject matter.

The questions that may be raised at this point would naturally be concerned with how this research has an effect on ESL classes. With this in mind a few cautious statements will be made concerning the implications of this study for the ESL classroom.

Since the high exploitation of practice opportunities outside of the classroom appears to be the key to success in this study it becomes essential for educators to assist the learners in doing this. Therefore, instructors should try to promote outside of classroom language contact as a means of enriching their students' sojourns in the host country.

As the formation of bonds takes time, the ESL teacher must be patient and let the students form the bonds naturally and spontaneously. To help the process, many college and university campuses operate peer programmes or something similar which match foreign students with host nationals who have similar likes and interests. Quite often the counterparts form close and long-lasting friendships. In addition, these bonds usually introduce foreign students to an entirely new network of host-nationals. Thus, expanding their networks even further. Other institutions offer homestays and volunteer work placements for students as a means of getting the learners out into the community. As this study shows, exposure to the target language outside of class assists student performance in the classroom.

Most foreign students who have come here to learn English will undoubtedly go through an adjustment period of some sort

depending on the length of the sojourn. It is quite natural for students to want to associate with others who have the same background, dialect, sense of humour and other cultural similarities and this should not be discouraged. Those networks should, however, be broadened to a bi- or multi-cultural network to enable the students to form English speaking contacts outside of their mono-cultural groups. As this research has shown, those students with a more extensive English language network outside of the classroom were also the ones who performed better in language and academic subject matter evaluation and had received a high score on their pro-term language proficiency assessment.

If there is significant contact with a host national network there will assuredly be a large amount of informal language learning taking place. However, d'Anglejan (1978) states that there is reason to believe that simply rubbing shoulders with native speakers is not sufficient—learners must receive an input of the target language directed to them by concerned native speakers. This unput must also be embedded in a context of social interaction. Therefore, the formation of bonds with native speakers will indeed provide more than strictly utilitarian discourse.

It must also be emphasized that social networks and support groups are not enough to help students through the stages of acculturation and increased language learning. In addition, teachers should incorporate cross-cultural material into their lessons to help ease the adjustment process. The inclusion of lessons on cross-cultural encounters would allow students to understand what they are experiencing.

The role of the ESL instructor amongst all of this cultural upheaval is an extremely diversified one. For many students their ESL instructor is often their first and only contact with the

majority host culture. Therefore, it is essential the instructor take on the role of cultural mediator in order to ease the students into the host culture and to enable them to adapt to their classroom and community situations. This will hopefully broaden their networks which may be reflected positively in the classroom.

The task of cultural mediator is principally to form a link between cultures. In particular, Bochner (1982) states that mediating persons bridge cultural gaps by introducing, translating, representing and reconciling the respective groups to each other. In doing this, the ESL teacher, for example, can create opportunities for bi- and multi-cultural exchanges. Also, if students and teachers develop a multicultural orientation they can act as guides and counsellors for the new sojourners.

As Furnham (1982) explains, the quality of learning a new culture is dependent on the experiences a person has in it, especially at the beginning of the visit. If sojourners are carefully introduced into a new society by sympathetic individuals, the evidence indicates that they may encounter fewer problems than if they are left to fend for themselves. (Selltiz and Cook, 1962).

Not all students, however, will need assistance. Taft (1981) states that large individual differences exist in the ability of people to cope with new environments. Demographic and personality variables such as age, sex, cognitive ability, socioeconomic class, and education may all be relevant. Therefore, ESL instructors must not expect all of their students to experience the same problems. All students possess unique personalities and will each react differently to their new environment, making varying amounts of language contact outside of the classroom.

Contact between culturally diverse individuals has an ancient tradition and many individuals tend to forget that cross-cultural interchange is as old as recorded history. Now more than ever

before there is a surge in the number of students going abroad to study English. As a result of this influx, ESL teachers need to be aware of the positive association between participation in the community and the classroom in order to best assist their students. Moreover, instructors should be cognizant of the positive relation between both of these factors and measures of language achievement. In addition, this study has shown that gender must be considered as a variable in regards to participation in class, specifically with Japanese learners. There is also evidence in this study that measures of participation in class and in the community relate not only to language achievement but to academic achievement more generally.

Finally, as the research indicates, a positive relationship exists between the use of English in the community with participation and language achievement. Therefore, learners must be made aware of this in order to receive the maximum benefit from their language study. Language instructors should promote participation in the community and encourage their students to make a strong effort to develop an English language network outside of the classroom. As this research has proven, the existence of extensive bi- or multi-cultural networks offers many rewards for language learners within and outside of the ESL classroom.

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LANGUAGE CONTACT PROFILE

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1. Name _____
2. About how much time do you spend speaking English outside of class every day? (circle one)
 - a. none
 - b. very little (directions, shopping, etc.)
 - c. occasionally (with friends, host family, etc.)
 - d. most of the time
3. How well do you think you speak English now?
 - a. poorly
 - b. fair
 - c. good
 - d. very good
 - e. excellent
4. When you have homework in English do you
 - a. do it as soon as you can
 - b. do it if you find the time
 - c. do it at the last possible moment
 - d. do it but turn it in late
 - e. none of these _____
5. During English classes do you
 - a. have a tendency to daydream about your country
 - b. have to force yourself to listen to the lesson
 - c. listen at all times, even when it's not your turn
 - d. listen when it's your turn but do other things when it's not
6. Do you watch television programmes in English?
 - a. as often as you can
 - b. once in awhile
 - c. not very often
 - d. never

- 82 c. prefer watching programmes in your native language.
Otherwise you do not watch television at all

7. If you have a choice between listening to a radio programme in your native language or in English you
- a. prefer English
 - b. sometimes listen to the English programmes and sometimes to those in your language
 - c. would not listen to the English programmes

8. List your three closest friends in Vancouver.
name of friend language usually spoken with friend

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

9. List the three English speaking Canadians that you speak English with the most. In what capacity do you know them? (e.g., teacher, busdriver, friend, neighbor, host-mother/father etc., storeclerk, etc.)

name of Canadian relationship

- a. _____
- b. _____
- c. _____

10. Do you spend time trying to improve your English outside of class? _____ How? (list all activities, e.g., watching t.v., reading, writing, speaking with friends, going to movies, etc.)

About how much time each day *for each activity*?

- a. one hour
 - b. two hours
 - c. three hours
11. In your opinion, what is the best way to improve your English speaking skills? What do you do to achieve this?